

HOUSE RESOLUTION 291  
By Jones S

A RESOLUTION to honor and recognize Joseph “Joe” Ferris Woolley upon his graduation from Belmont University.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of the General Assembly should pause to pay tribute to those individuals who, through their natural talents and unflagging commitment to excellence, have distinguished themselves both in the classroom and in life; and

WHEREAS, Joseph “Joe” Ferris Woolley is one such exceptional student who will be completing his college coursework with honors from Belmont University; and

WHEREAS, Joe Woolley was born and raised in the great mountain state of Idaho and made his own way in the world to the “big” city of Nashville at the tender age of 18; and

WHEREAS, in his formative years at Twin Fall High School in Idaho, he achieved excellence in athletics, in academics, and in his ability to stir up trouble, setting the stage for his bright future in Nashville; and

WHEREAS, while living in Idaho, he served his community well as a volunteer professional ski patroller with the National Ski Patrol, as a licensed emergency medical technician, and as a life guard instructor with the American Red Cross; and

WHEREAS, upon arriving in Nashville with his dear friend Misty, Mr. Woolley found himself taking time off from his academic pursuits to find life experience in the working world by holding down multiple jobs to pay for their slightly scary apartment in a not-so-savory area of Nashville; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Woolley found employment at the Centennial Sportsplex as the preeminent Aquatic Supervisor of the facility, where he met his mentor and inspiration to return to school, Mr. David Taylor, who encouraged Joe to pursue academics; and

WHEREAS, through the assistance of several of his close friends, including Mr. Taylor, Mr. Michael Ward, and Mr. Bill Haralson, and though his working long hours at Tribe Bar and Restaurant, Lil' Joe, as he is affectionately known, was able to enroll at Belmont University, located in the heart of the historic Belmont/Hillsboro neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, a seeker of the truth, Mr. Woolley enrolled in the inaugural class of Belmont's New Century Journalism Program, majoring in journalism with an emphasis in Convergence Media; and

WHEREAS, his career at Belmont University has been exceptional both in terms of his academic achievements and his extracurricular activity participation; he has achieved a 3.6 GPA, and he is a member of several organizations and clubs, including the James Madison Society (President), the Journalism Club (Treasurer), and the College Democrats (President); and

WHEREAS, his exceptional life-story led Belmont University to select him as one of three students to represent the University in its media campaign to promote the school both in television and web advertising; and

WHEREAS, during his collegiate career, Joe Woolley took much pride in learning about different cultures through the study abroad program; he completed summer classes in Spanish in the beautiful country of Spain, where he fell in love with the magnificent sights of Barcelona, Madrid, Toledo, Santiago, and Seville; he also managed to catch a purse snatcher in the historic cafes of Spain; and

WHEREAS, he was also awarded a scholarship to study abroad at the British Broadcast Company (BBC) for two weeks in the winter of 2005 in London, where he reveled in the differences between American and British media; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Woolley has also received many prestigious scholarships for his academic excellence, including the 2006 Bridgestone/Firestone Public Affairs Scholarship for Outstanding Journalism and Public Relations Students, the 2005 World Trade Council Scholarship for Free World Trade, the 2004 Horn Family Academic Scholarship for GPA and Leadership, and the 2005 Alumni Scholarship for Representing the University in Community; and

WHEREAS, committed to developing his journalistic talents and abilities, Mr. Woolley sought and secured an internship with the nationally renowned Freedom Forum, first in its Diversity Institute and then in its First Amendment Center, where he was able to work directly with legendary editor, journalist, and civil rights pioneer, John Seigenthaler, Sr.; and

WHEREAS, after a hard-fought audition process against hundreds of want-to-be models, Mr. Woolley was selected as one of eight models for Bridgestone/Firestone's 2005 national print advertising campaign, and he was featured in dozens of national magazines; and

WHEREAS, Joe Woolley's political interests led him to be active in the Democratic campaigns of General Wesley Clark, John Kerry, and John Edwards in 2004, and he attended and worked at the Democratic National Conventional in Boston with the GLBT caucus, otherwise known as "Team Gay"; and

WHEREAS, devoted to the estimable principles of democracy and equality, Joe Woolley is a founding member and board member of the Tennessee Equality Project, and he also served as a team leader for the EQUALITY YES effort at the Metropolitan Council of Davidson County and a member of the Nashville Steering Committee of the Human Rights Campaign; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Woolley has been selected as one of twenty-five students to attend the notable student outreach effort of the International Radio and Television Society's Summer Fellowship Program; he was selected from over 800 applicants to receive an all-expense paid, nine week fellowship in New York City, where he will work on The Daily Show with John Stewart and the CBS Evening News, with new host Katie Couric; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Woolley's academic and personal achievements are a source of tremendous pride for his parents, Jerry and Ray Woolley; his sister, Sarah; his shining star, Jesse; his grandparents, Mike and Nancy Barron; all of his aunts, uncles, and cousins; his partner, Jim; and their dogs, Bo and Roxie; and

WHEREAS, Joe Woolley epitomizes the spirit of volunteerism and commitment to excellence that are characteristic of all true Tennesseans; and

WHEREAS, Joe Woolley's dedication to excellence is clearly deserving of the respect, admiration, and commendation of this legislative body; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we hereby commend Joseph Ferris Woolley for his outstanding academic success, congratulate him upon earning a Bachelor of Arts degree from Belmont University, and extend to him our best wishes for every future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.